



## THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF TARBUTT ACCESSIBLE ELECTION PLAN 2026 MUNICIPAL ELECTION

The Township of Tarbutt is committed to making the 2026 Municipal Election accessible by working to accommodate the needs of all electors through effective procedures and processes. These procedures can be adapted as needed in consultation with the person requiring the accommodation.

### Introduction

The Clerk is responsible for the proper legislative and administrative conduct of municipal elections in The Township of Tarbutt. In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* as amended, and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, the Clerk is authorized to establish procedures and provide appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities will have the opportunity to participate fully in the 2026 Municipal Election. As such, the 2026 Municipal Election will be conducted in such a manner to:

- Have regard for the needs of electors, candidates, and election officers with disabilities;
- Ensure that voting places are accessible to all;
- Provide appropriate accommodations tailored to individual needs.

### Objectives

This plan outlines the measures The Township of Tarbutt will put in place to support equal access and participation for all electors and candidates. These measures ensure that:

- Persons with disabilities can fully participate in the Municipal Election as an elector, candidate, election officer, or registered third-party advertiser;
- All voting locations are accessible;
- Persons with disabilities are able to cast their vote independently and verify their selection, and that assistance is available if desired;
- Persons with disabilities have full and equal access to all information about where and when to vote and about eligible candidates;
- Efforts are made to ensure that electors with disabilities are aware of the accessibility measures available via sources such as newsprint, election communications, the Township's website, and social media. These measures will be adapted as needed at the request of the person requiring the accommodation.

If you face a barrier to voting or have any concerns about the accessibility of the 2026 Municipal Election, please contact the Clerk at 705-782-6776 or [clerk@tarbutt.ca](mailto:clerk@tarbutt.ca)

This document is available in alternate formats upon request. Please contact the Municipal Office at [clerk@tarbutt.ca](mailto:clerk@tarbutt.ca) or 705-782-6776

## **Voting Method and Locations**

The 2026 Municipal Election for The Township of Tarbutt will be conducted using Traditional Paper Ballot Voting only.

Advanced Voting will take place on Saturday, October 17, 2026 from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm at the *Municipal Office, 27 Barr Road South*.

The Municipal Office is a barrier free facility with accessible entrances for persons with mobility impairments. Both entrances to the building are equipped with marked automatic door openers and the doors are wide enough to accommodate wheelchair or scooter traffic. Barrier-free parking spaces are available at the Municipal Office, immediately in front of both entrances. The interior corridors are kept clear and floors are even and hard surfaced and any doormats or carpeting shall be level with the floor. A designated barrier free private area with adequate lighting and seating with a suitably low writing surface will be made available to persons who may want to sit while casting their ballot. The building has suitable lighting and seating and the washroom is accessible and large enough to accommodate a wheelchair.

On Election Day, October 26, 2026, voting will take place at the *MacLennan Community Hall* from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm, located at 762 MacLennan Rd.

The main entrance to the MacLennan Hall is equipped with a ramp and marked automatic door opener which will accommodate building access for persons using a wheelchair or scooter. The floor surface is kept clear and is hard surfaced. The Hall has suitable lighting and seating, and the washroom is accessible and large enough to accommodate a wheelchair.

## **Assistive Devices, Service Animals, and Support Persons**

Election staff will make assistive devices available to aid those with mobility issues or low vision to cast their paper ballot. The following aids will be made available to electors at both Voting Locations:

- Every booth will be equipped with magnifying screens and easy grip pencils.
- Pads of paper and pens will be available throughout both voting locations for people that may require assistance with communication.
- An Election Assistant will be available to provide assistance to a voter, should it be required
- Voters are able to bring a support person with them to cast their vote. Only one ballot will be provided to the voter and their support person. Persons requiring the assistance of a service animal are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at both voting locations.

Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person at either Voting Location who may cast the ballot for them or read the ballot aloud. Both the elector and their support person will be required to complete form LC24, Oral Oath at Voting Place.

Alternatively, the Clerk or designated Election Official can assist a voter in completing their ballot. In this instance, prior to entering the designated area, the person requiring assistance, in consultation with the Clerk or designated Election Official, will determine the extent to which assistance is needed and the best way it may be provided. This may include casting the ballot as directed by the elector, if requested. All Election Officials appointed by the Clerk are required to swear an oath stating their commitment to confidentiality and declaring that they will cast the ballot as directed by the voter, if a voter requests this type of assistance.

### **Candidate Accessibility and Support**

The Township of Tarbutt recognizes that the democratic process starts with the ability to run for office. Candidates may request individual appointments for filing nominations to ensure a quiet, accessible environment. All nomination forms will be provided in accessible, screen reader friendly PDFs. The Voters' List will be provided in a digital format (CSV) compatible with assistive technology.

Costs incurred specifically for a candidate's disability, such as ASL interpreters, specialized transit for canvassing, are exempt from campaign spending limits. (Section 88.20 (9) of the *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996)

### **Information to Electors – Alternative Formats**

Election information will be made available through a range of channels and in diverse formats, including:

- Large print paper documents (upon request) which will also be available on the Township website in downloadable format. Website documents are screen reader friendly.
- Materials will be written in clear, plain language for electors, service providers, and others who may provide support.
- Notices will be posted on community bulletin boards at municipal and private facilities to increase access and awareness.

### **Election Staff Training**

Election staff will be trained in accordance with The Township of Tarbutt's most recent Accessibility Plan. Elections staff will be trained to recognize and ensure that persons with disabilities are served in a way that accommodates their needs. Training will be based on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and include the following:

1. How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
2. How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a service animal or support person;
3. How to use election tools in an accessible manner to deliver election services;

#### 4. What to do if a person is having difficulty accessing election information or services.

In case of an emergency, every site will have a specific evacuation plan for persons with disabilities, ensuring that staff know how to assist those with mobility or sensory needs during an alarm. The Clerk holds the legal authority under the *Municipal Elections Act* to declare an election emergency if circumstances such as extreme weather, infrastructure failures, or safety threats, prevent the election from proceeding normally.

#### **Monitoring and Feedback**

Public feedback about the manner in which election services are provided to persons with disabilities may be submitted to the Clerk's Office through a variety of methods.

Telephone: 705-782-6776

In Person: At the Township Office, 27 Barr Road South, Tarbutt Township

Fax: 705-782-4274

E-mail: [clerk@tarbutt.ca](mailto:clerk@tarbutt.ca)

Mail: Clerk's Office, 27 Barr Road South, Desbarats, ON, P0R 1E0

One method of submitting feedback is to complete the Concerns, Inquiry, and Complaint Form available on the Township's website <https://tarbutt.ca/frequently-accessed-documents/> Paper copies of this form are available at the Township office, and the form can be forwarded to the Clerk for action. In addition, staff working in the Township Office can complete the form and submit the feedback on behalf of a person with a disability. Each completed form is reviewed by Township staff who will respond directly to the candidate or elector within five business days.

The feedback process provides election staff with an opportunity to take corrective measures to prevent similar recurrences, address training needs, enhance service delivery, and consider alternative methods of providing election services.

In accordance with Sec. 12.1 (3) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the Clerk will submit an Accessible Election Report to Council regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers relating to electors and candidates with disabilities.

The Township of Tarbutt's website is continuously updated to reflect the most recent election developments and information. Visit the site for an up to date list of candidates and other important messages or events throughout the election period. <https://tarbutt.ca/municipal-election-2026/>

Please note that the Clerk, at any time, has the right to amend this plan to facilitate the vote, count of the votes, and security of the vote. The Clerk's ruling on any interpretation of this document is final.